

Andrew Jackson to John Pitchlynn, August 5, 1830, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO JOHN PITCHLYNN.¹

¹ In Jackson's handwriting but corrected in Eaton's. The words in brackets are by the latter. For Pitchlynn, see vol. I., p. 358n., vol. II., p. 74n.

Hermitage, August 5, 1830.

D'r Sir, your letter of the 24th of july has just been received. I would have been happy to have seen you at Nashville and received your views as it regards the permanant settlement of the choctaws west of the Mississippi. I am aware of your friendship for them and the great anxiety you have for their future welfare, but great as I know it [to be] it cannot be more so than mine. At the request of their confidential agent, Major Haley, who communicated to me the great desire the choctaw chiefs had to see me, and enter into arrangements to surrender their possesessions, and remove across the Mississippi to the country provided for them, [and at his suggestion that the[y] desired to see me,] that they had great confidence that I would do them liberal Justice. I am now here to meet [and to confer with them] their chiefs, agreeably to the promise made to Major Haley, The Secretary of War and myself [are here ready to] meet them in the neighbourhood of Franklin. [Of this they have for some time past been informed, and as yet we have] heard nothing from them of a positive character. Whether they chiefs are comming to meet us or not [we are not certainly advised.] Our official business urges a return to the city of Washington and we cannot stay much longer here to meet them. We therefore request that you will make known to them that we are now present awaiting there arrival agreeably to my promise to their confidential agent Major Haley. I beg of you to say to them, that their *interest*

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happiness peace and prosperity depend upon their removal beyond the jurisdiction of the laws of the State of Mississippi. These things have been [often times] explained to them fully and I forbear to repeat; but request that you make known to them that Congress to enable them to remove and comfortably to arrange themselves at their new homes has made liberal appropriations. It was a measure I had much at heart and sought to effect because I was satisfied that the Indians could not possibly live under the laws of the States. If now they shall refuse to accept the liberal terms offered, they only must be liable for whatever evils and difficulties may arise. I feel conscious of having done my duty to my red children and if any failure of my good intention arises, it will be attributable to their want of duty to themselves, not to me.

I have directed the Secretary of War to write [you fully and finally on this subject so important to the interest of the Choct.] make it known to my red children, and tell them to listen well to it—it comes from a friend and the last time I shall address them on the subject should the chiefs fail to meet us now.

I am your friend